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USDA Forest Service
Southern Region

**The Federal
Women's Program**

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What is the Federal Women's Program? The Federal Women's Program (FWP) is part of a national effort to assure equal employment opportunities for all Americans. The FWP was mandated by the President of the United States in 1967 through Executive Order 11375. Forest Service line officers are responsible for carrying out and meeting FWP goals. Forest supervisors have appointed Federal Women's Program managers (FWPM's) to help reach these objectives. The FWPM's provide advice about increasing the employment and advancement of women. In addition, they provide advice on the participation of women in all Forest Service activities, programs and benefits.

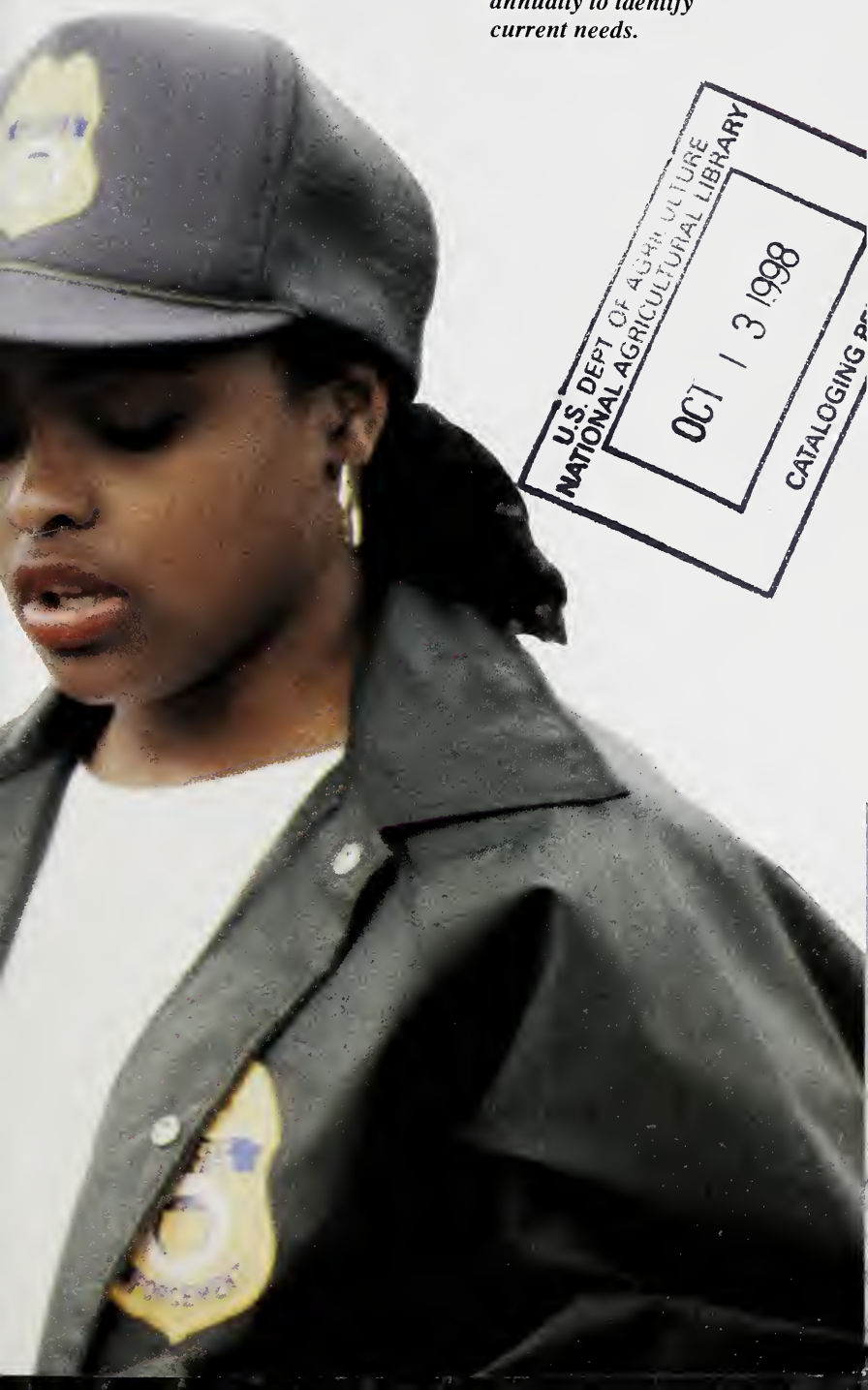


Increasing the number of women in nontraditional occupations is one goal of the Federal Women's Program.

Through the FWP, women are advised about their rights and opportunities. They also receive encouragement about realizing their full potential.



Women remain underrepresented in certain job categories. Employment goals are revised annually to identify current needs.



What is the purpose of the FWP?

The purpose of the FWP is to increase employment and advancement of women, especially in traditionally “male” jobs, so that women will be fairly represented in all types of jobs and levels of the organization. For example, women are underrepresented as regional foresters, forest supervisors, district rangers, overhead fire team bosses, deputy regional foresters, and directors.

What are FWP’s immediate emphasis areas in the Forest Service?

- Increase the number of women in professional and nontraditional occupations.
- Increase the average grade level of women.
- Increase the representation of women in all Forest Service activities, programs, and benefits.

Are there employment goals for women?

Women are included in the regional work force analysis to determine if women are underrepresented in major job categories (professional, administrative, technical, clerical, other, blue collar). This analysis is conducted annually as part of the region’s Affirmative Employment Plan (AEP). Pursuant to 29 CFR 1613.203, employment goals are established on the basis of underrepresentation levels and available opportunities. For information on the region’s employment goals, please refer to the regional AEP for the current year.

Why do we need a special program for women?

The President mandated this program because



women face special problems in employment and career advancement. The problems center around role stereotypes and myths about women. Unlike ethnic minority groups, women have been traditionally employed by the Forest Service. However, they have typically occupied the lower pay levels and jobs that are dead-ended.

How does the FWP work?

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The FWPM assesses the status of women as to job categories and grade levels. As a result of that assessment, plans are devised to deal with the problems that are identified. For example, a forest may find, through the analysis, that there are no professional women on certain districts. The plan, then, might involve intensive recruitment efforts at colleges and universities to assure that women get into the applicant pool for professional positions.

Another problem might be that women have difficulty identifying career goals. In this instance, the role of the FWPM would be to assist them in obtaining counseling, training, or other guidance. As one can see from these examples, the program operates in two ways: • to assess needs and opportunities for women in the work force; and • to encourage women to realize their full potential and know their rights.



How does the FWPM assist unit managers?

FWPM's advise and consult with management. They identify problems and barriers that hinder employment and advancement of women. They also offer solutions to raise managers' and employees' awareness of the problem areas identified. In addition, women may be offered training in assertiveness and career counseling. Workshops may be held on the informal system by which many major decisions are reached in organizations. FWPM's are involved in much behind-the-scenes work with management. They analyze policies, procedures, and practices that have an impact on employment and advancement of women. They encourage managers to establish upward mobility positions and inform women of training opportunities.

Has the FWP been successful in the Southern Region?

Yes, to a certain extent. There has been steady growth by women in the Southern Region's work force. This can be verified by referring to the most current regional Affirmative Employment Plan Update and AEP Accomplishment reports. These two reports are available at each forest and Regional Office unit.



In addition, most committees, ad hoc groups, selection panels, etc., include women. However, there is still much work to do. Therefore, it is important that all of us become involved, ask questions, and help promote the FWP.

Efforts to place women in higher pay grades will increase the average grade level of women throughout the agency.

With continued work, women will be fairly represented in all types of jobs and levels of the organization.





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Who are the FWP manager's in the Forest Service, Southern Region, and forests?

In the locations listed below, they are:

Washington Office

Name

Telephone Number

Regional Office

Name

Telephone Number

Forest / District

Name

Telephone Number

For further information,
check your unit's AEP,
FSM 1700, FSH 1709.11,
or contact your unit's
civil rights office.

Telephone: 404/347-7358

FTS 404/347-7358



USDA Forest Service

Southern Region

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